

COMMUNICATION METHODS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

¹Emmily A. Owuor; ²Jeremiah M. Kalai; ³Okoth Ursula

¹⁻³University of Nairobi

¹emijones20@gmail.com ²jeremikalai@uonbi.ac.ke; ³ursulla.achieng@uonbi.ac.ke

ABSTRACT

Communication in educational institutions plays an important role in determining social awareness, cultures, interpersonal relationships, and good quality human resources for the well-being of mankind. However, whereas effective communication is touted as the remedy to efficient management of employee performance in organization, limited information is available regarding how the same influence students' discipline in public secondary schools. This is critical especially in areas such as Kisumu County where public secondary schools recorded an average of 24.6% of all the disciplinary cases reported in Kenya. This study explored how communication methods by school administration influence students' discipline in Kisumu County. A cross sectional survey design on a target population of 225 public secondary schools comprising of 225 principals, 225 discipline masters and 225 student council leaders alongside seven Sub County education officers was adopted.

A sample size of 144 schools was derived using Yamane's formula. Stratified random sampling based on school category was used to select the schools, from which a sample size of 432 respondents for questionnaire administration was derived. Census was used to select the subcounty education officers for interviews.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse quantitative data while qualitative data was analysed thematically. Statistically significant positive correlation between communication practices and students' discipline ($n=137$, $r=.506$, $p < .05$)

among secondary schools was found, with communication practices accounting for 25.6% variation in student discipline among the secondary schools. It is concluded that moderate use of effective communication methods, through Kamkunji and subject/class teachers to the students on matters of discipline exists in secondary schools in Kisumu County.

Keywords: *Communication methods; Students' Discipline; Teacher communication skills; Principals' Communication methods; Public secondary Schools.*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Effective communication has been widely observed to be the remedy to effective and efficient management performance of employees in an organization (Nebo, Nwankwo, Okonkwo and Ifeoma, 2015). Communication forms an essential integral part of management strategies for every organization. According to Brinia, Selimi, Dimos and Kondea (2022), an educational institution is a social system in which stakeholders interact within the given system of values and rules. The institutions play an important role in determining social awareness, cultures, interpersonal relationships, and good quality human resources for the well-being of mankind (Habaci, Celik, Habaci, Adiguzelli and Kurt, 2013; Srivastava, 2016).

Described by Korkosz (2011) as a symbolic process in which individuals act to exchange perceptions and ultimately building a knowledge bank for themselves and others for the purpose of shaping future actions, educational organizations too depend on effective communication to ensure their purposes and goals are achieved. However, whereas effective communication especially on the part of teachers has been positively associated with student academic performance, how communication methods by the administration influence students' discipline remains unclear.

There are fundamental human conducts expected of members of educational institutions, and in their absence, the institution cannot perform towards its ideal targets (Ouma, Simatwa & Serem, 2013). With regards to educational systems, disciplined students are those whose practices, actions and inactions adjust to the set standards and guidelines within the school, (Ali Amin, Alimni, Kurniawan, Septi & Azzahra, 2021).

According to Gitome, Katola & Nyabwari (2013, cited in Obiero, Pacho & Nyatuka, 2022), discipline refers to adhering to the set guidelines and standards, and involves the student's ability to differentiate right from wrong based on the societal expectations. Eshetu (2014), on the other hand, argues that discipline is a parameter of someone's successful life, and it is reflected through the accumulation one's daily activities and behaviours in terms of morals, values and ethics which are always connected and interrelated to the society and attached to societal culture. Indiscipline is argued to be a demonstration of unaccepted conduct in a social network set up or in the general public (Omote, Thinguri, & Moenga, 2015).

Whereas several authors (see Dhillonand Kaur, 2021; Habaci et al, 2013; Mukurunge and Bhila, 2019) have reported existence of significant relationship between effective communication and student performance, influence of the same on student discipline remains understudied.

In the educational organizations, communication has been documented as a tool for achieving diverse institutional goals. For instance, a study done in Greece by Brinia et al (2022) which analysed the impact of communication on the effectiveness of educational organizations revealed that development of an effective communication system within an educational institution can potentially become the driving force for effective functioning. Habaci et al (2013) reports a study finding in Turkey that effective communication in an educational organization has significant influence on managers, teachers, and students' motivations and satisfaction.

In a survey conducted among ninety-eight public elementary school teachers and five school administrators from Calamba City (Philippines) focusing on communication satisfaction among teachers and its working relationship with school heads, Tuazon and Padiernos (2016) showed that communication builds commitment and elicits cooperation in accomplishing school tasks. On their part, Mukurunge and Bhila (2019) revealed in a study done in Lesotho that the top to bottom communication model used by management is ineffective in bringing the best out of university staff. In Nigeria, Nebo et al (2015) examined the role of effective communication on organizational performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University (Nigeria) and showed that effective communication is the remedy to efficient management performance of

employees in an organization. In a more relevant study as the current work, Obiero et al (2022) investigated the influence of the principal's communication skills on student discipline among secondary schools in West Pokot Sub County (Kenya). They found that despite the principals' communication skills being considered to be below average, it has a significant relationship with student discipline.

Kisumu County is among the highly rated counties with high cases of student indiscipline. In Maseno School, Luvega (2016) reported that, act of sodomy against Form one students have been a tradition since the 90s; examination dishonesty leading to cancellation of 2015 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination results in several schools in the county. Conversely, statistics on school indiscipline cases obtained from MOE denote lack of discipline among secondary schools in Kisumu County between 2016 and 2019. For instance, Kisumu contributed an average of 32.9% of the reported cases of disobedience from all public secondary schools in the 47 counties in Kenya. Similarly, an average of 28.4% of sneaking; 27.6% of arson; 24.5% of use of mobile phones; 23.6% of exam cheating, and 19% of drug abuse in all public secondary schools in the 47 counties were from Kisumu during 2016 – 2019 and thus raise queries on the administrative practices in secondary schools, and principal's ability to instill discipline in students.

The influence of school communication methods on student discipline is an area which demands sufficient investigation owing to disciplinary cases being reported in Kenya each year especially in places like Kisumu County.

Records from the Directorate of Education in Kisumu County indicate that of the leading disciplinary cases such as disturbance, disobedience, sneaking, arson, exam cheating, use of mobile phones, and drug abuse, 24.6% were reported from public secondary schools in Kisumu (Kisumu County Directorate of Education, 2020). This implies that the remaining 75.4% of the cases were reported from the other 46 counties in Kenya. This tends to suggest that public secondary schools from Kisumu County have the highest cases of student indiscipline among all the 47 counties in Kenya.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Administrative practices like communication methods have been documented by researchers as some of the practices with significant influence on student discipline. However, effectiveness of these administrative practices and policy interventions have raised concern in some of the secondary schools among the 47 counties in Kenya.

For instance, during 2018 academic year, 114 arson cases on school buildings and other assets by students alongside rampant drug abuse were reported. In Kisumu County, 23.6% of students whose KCSE results were cancelled for examination dishonest by KNEC during 2016 – 2019 in Kenya were from public secondary schools in the area. In addition, secondary schools in Kisumu County recorded an average of 24.6% of all the disciplinary cases reported among the 47 counties in Kenya. Studies done in Kenya on administrative practices (King'ori, 2012); Kuria, 2012; Mbogori, 2012) have tended to concentrate on the principals' leadership style and students' discipline management.

More importantly, the moderating effect of education policies in this relationship too, has not been explained. Therefore, this study will assess how selected administrative practices influence student discipline in secondary schools in Kisumu County and determine the moderating effect of education policies in this relationship.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of communication methods on student discipline in public secondary schools in Kisumu County, Kenya.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Explore how the principal's communication through student assemblies influences student discipline in public secondary schools in Kisumu County, Kenya
- ii. Establish how communication through student council leaders influence student discipline in public secondary schools in Kisumu County, Kenya
- iii. Determine how communication through subject teachers influences student discipline in public secondary schools in Kisumu County, Kenya

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Student Discipline

School environment requires total obedience to school rules and regulations as part of the students' life, discipline being a significant part because it is paramount for learning (Virtudazo and Guhao, 2020). Discipline plays also an important role in molding the future citizens of a nation (Ning, 2018).

According to Etyang and Okoth (2018), discipline refers to as a minimum standard of performance that every student must observe. Ilyasin (2019) lists minimum standard of performance expected of a student to include being clean at school, avoiding fighting among peers, obeying school's regulation, preventing tardiness, and realizing that they are under teachers' control every day. Whereas extant literature exists with regards to school discipline, there seems to be limited concurrence concerning how it is managed across the globe.

Ergün (2014) examined the disciplinary behaviors displayed at secondary education institutions located in Turkey and the disciplinary punishments imposed for those behaviors. The study made an attempt to reveal how disciplinary punishments imposed at high schools were distributed by different variables and whether those punishments varied by year, school type, gender, grade, and province. Physical violence behaviors were the most frequently seen disciplinary behaviors at schools. In addition, teachers-imposed punishments, which were normally inflicted in the last resort, in the first place. Dimov, Atanasoska and Trajkovska (2019) sought to find out what teachers think about school discipline and indiscipline, what kind of model of school discipline do they implement in their work, and how teachers are solving problems with indiscipline among schools in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Data was collected from 70 teachers from VI to IX grade in primary schools from Bitola, Prilep, and Ohrid municipalities. The findings indicated that the educational component in the schools is reduced, the teaching staff are more often faced with problems of how to establish discipline with dignity, how to raise the quality of moral

education, and how to solve the problems of indiscipline of individual students.

Ning (2018) examined the importance of discipline in Chinese schooling in Shanghai using two-level linear analyses and showed that the classroom disciplinary climate of schools significantly affected student mathematics achievement. Additionally, residual analyses showed that students in different percentiles within economies, as well as students in the same percentiles of different economies, benefited or hindered differently from classroom disciplinary climate of schools, hinting at shrinking individual-level differences in student mathematics achievement. In Philippines, Virtudazo and Guhao (2020) used the perspectives of teachers to describe the lived experiences of public-school teachers on student discipline in the classroom. A qualitative phenomenological approach using in-depth interview and focus group discussion were conducted to 21 teachers. Six themes that emerged as experienced by teachers in imposing classroom discipline; namely, harassment and intimidation; student defiance and disobedience; teachers' risk of litigation; parental assent; favorable learning environment; and appreciation.

The participants of the study had different approaches in coping with the problems on student discipline in the classroom, with the themes parental involvement and collaboration; positive reinforcement and affection; constancy and consistence; knowing students on a personal level; calmness and composure; and constructive approach. As to their insights, the themes generated were know-your-students; 'traditional approach' may no longer work; teachers need support from administrators; and parents' involvement is crucial.

Lukman & Hamadi (2014) analyzed the disciplinary measures used in senior secondary schools in Nigeria with the emphasis on the problems encountered with a view to proffering far reaching solutions to the challenges. They found that truancy, absenteeism, fighting, stealing and drug addiction among others are typical examples of disciplinary problems experienced in Nigerian secondary schools. They also revealed that parental/home, political, social and economic, school environment, school curriculum and peer group influence among others are the causes of disciplinary problems. Geleta (2018) explored major factors contributing to students' discipline problems in some primary schools of Dambi Dollo and Nekemte Towns in Ethiopia. Fourteen male and nineteen female teachers and seven male students, totaling to forty people were selected as participants of the study. Information was collected from the respondents by using questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion (FGD). Findings illustrated that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers have knowledge and skills gaps in properly teaching and handling their students in class, they do not collaborate in students' management systems, schools also declined to consistently manage students by applying school laws, and students were dissatisfied by classroom instructional processes. Other causes of students' discipline problems were peer influences, hatred towards English language, automatic promotion, and classroom physical conditions.

Simatwa (2012) investigated infractions and methods used by head teachers in the management of student discipline in secondary schools in Bungoma County. The study population consisted of 125 headteachers, 125 Deputy Headteachers, 1,575 teachers, and 2,075 prefects.

Questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis guide were used to collect data. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study revealed that many infractions were experienced in secondary schools and headteachers used a wide range of methods managing student discipline in schools. This included expulsion, suspension, caning, physical punishment, detention, reprimanding, kneeling, guidance and counselling, fining, rewards, wearing school uniform at all times, self-commitment in writing to maintain good conduct, pinching, slapping and smacking. It was concluded that methods of establishing and maintaining student discipline in schools could not be applied wholesale, but they were contingent upon the environment.

In another study, Etyang & Okoth (2018) analysed the role of class teachers in maintaining students' discipline in secondary schools in Teso South District, Kenya. Purposive sampling and stratified random sampling were used to obtain 81 teachers and 10 head teachers. Interview guide and questionnaire were used to collect data. The findings showed that class teachers assist in maintaining students' discipline in secondary schools through participating in administrative tasks, curriculum implementation, and guidance and counseling.

2.2 Communication Methods and Student Discipline

Dhillon and Kaur (2021) investigated the effect of teachers' communication style on their communication effectiveness, based on self-assessment, during classroom teaching in India. The results indicated that communication style has significant influence on communication effectiveness, with "Expressiveness" and "Preciseness"

emerging as best styles of communication, whereas "Verbal Aggressiveness" has negative impact on faculties' communication effectiveness. Findings also indicated that gender differences on the basis of two communication effectiveness variables—"Listening" and "Ability to get the Message Across." But there was no difference in instructors' communication effectiveness when compared on basis of subject specialization. On their part, Amin et al (2021) sought to determine the comparison and influence of teacher communication variables and the disciplined character of elementary school students. This was a mixed method research with an explanatory design. Data was collected by means of a questionnaire and interviews from 80 students in elementary schools. The results obtained showed that elementary school 9 Jambi City had a higher percentage than elementary school 9 Bengkulu City so that elementary school 9 Jambi City had advantages in teacher communication and student discipline character. Thus, teacher communication can be implemented with a very good student discipline character in elementary school students.

Tuazon and Padiernos (2016) conducted a study to assess communication satisfaction among teachers and to relate it to their working relationship with school heads. Ninety-eight public elementary school teachers and five school administrators from Calamba City, Philippines participated in the study where the descriptive-correlation research design was applied. Self-report surveys and interviews were utilized in data-gathering. The teachers were found very satisfied with school communication. A harmonious working relationship between school heads and teachers was positively manifested. The teachers' communication satisfaction was significantly related to

school head-teachers working relationship. Khan et al (2017) assessed the perception of students regarding the role of teacher communication skills in their academic success. Data was collected via the questionnaire method. Target population comprised of 14 universities in Pakistan offering sports sciences & physical education programs. Findings showed that teacher communication skills have a significant role in the academic achievement of the students.

Regionally, Nebo et al (2015) examines the role of effective communication on organizational performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The survey research method was adopted for the study and the study relied much on secondary and primary data. The population of this research work was drawn from the Academic and Non-academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The population is made up of 170 non-academic and 130 Academic Staff. The findings from the study show that effective communication is the remedy to effective and efficient management performance of employees in an organization. Mukurunge and Bhila (2019) investigated the communication challenges between staff members and management within universities in Lesotho. The study gathered information through questionnaires and the data was presented and analysed quantitatively through tables and graphs. The results reflect that the top to bottom communication model predominantly used by management in Lesotho is not effective in bringing the best out of university staff.

Locally in Kenya, Obiero et al (2022) investigated the influence of the principal's communication skills on student discipline in secondary schools in West Pokot Sub County. The target comprised of 497

teachers and 2953 students from the public day secondary schools in the study area. Findings showed that encouraging open door policy was at a low level, while encouraging students to bring new creative ideas on discipline was also at a low level. Allowing the students to determine the dress code and setting aside specific days for meetings with students on discipline matters were also at low-level. Findings from correlation analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between principal's communication skills and student discipline.

The study findings indicate that the principals' communication skills can be considered below average. Kuria and Muthiu (2019) examined the effectiveness of student councils in conflict resolutions and communication in secondary school management in Nyeri County, Kenya. Specific objectives included examination of the challenges affecting student councils in communication for effective school Management and establishing the challenges affecting student councils in conflict resolutions for effective school Management.

The study found the communication challenges of the student councils to be poor mastery of English and Kiswahili language, lack of communication channels, and speaking in vernacular. The communication challenges of student councils can be mitigated through use of suggestion boxes, banning of vernacular languages, and encouragement of conversation without fear of intimidation. In another study which seems to address similar issues as the current study, Kyalo, Kanori & Njagi (2017) investigate the influence of student councils' involvement as a link of communication between students and administration on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kathonzi Sub-County, Kenya.

The study adopted a descriptive survey design on a target population of 30 public secondary schools. The results were presented in form of frequency tables and chi square tests. Chi square tests were used to show the relationship between the variables. The results of the study indicated that schools where a student council did not act as a link of communication were characterized by higher levels of indiscipline than those where student council acted as a link to the administration.

THE STUDY THEORY

The study was anchored on the General Systems Theory (GST) advanced by advanced by Von Bertalanffy in the 1930s and after the Second World War (Bertalanffy, 1972). According to Johnson (2019), 'system' in the GST was defined by Bertalanffy as a complex of interacting components that together have the characteristics of an organized whole. Key tenets of the GST are that components of systems are often systems in their own right. In this context, each member of the school organization (students, teachers, administration-principal) is also a person with similar but also unique emergent characteristics. From the perspective of GST, systems can be seen as being both composed of, and existing within, a *hierarchy* of systems. The school's performance will be affected by their immediate environment, which will include other systems (students, teachers, administration-principal). Another tenet is that the GST places the emphasis on the *relationship* between components rather than simply the components themselves. The teachers, for that matter, must cope well with the student on one hand, and the administration (principal) on the other hand (Mwambi, 2020).

For Daft (2010), the basic system theory of organizations is made up of five major components: inputs, a transformation process, outputs, feedback, and the environment.

Systems theory is relevant to education production function. According to Dissanayake (2021), education has a high-priority function in the production of human resources, and that the production functions is a relationship between the amount of input and intervening factors to produce a certain good, with consideration to its quality. An education production function therefore represents a functional relationship between school and students' inputs to an associated measure of school outputs including student discipline.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a cross sectional survey design with mixed methods. The researcher collected primary data using both quantitative and qualitative approaches as supported by Zegwaard and Hoskyn(2015). This design was useful in allowing the researcher to triangulate results emerging from interviews with the principals and data obtained from teachers (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

3.2 Study population and Sample

The study target population comprised of 225 public secondary schools in Kisumu County. This comprised of all the 225 principals, 225 discipline masters and 225 student council leaders alongside seven Sub County education officers. This made it 682 as the study population. This study employed Yamane (1967; cited in Israel, 2013) formula to calculate the sample size of the study. The computed sample size, from targeted 225

schools and 0.05 level of precision was therefore 144.

There were therefore 144 principals, 144 Discipline Masters (DMs), and 144 student council leaders (SLs).

As recommended by Nanjundeswaraswamy and Divakar (2021), stratified technic was used to select the teachers based on school category or stratum where six respondents were obtained from each school as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sampling frame for schools and Teachers

School category (Stratum)	Sub-stratum	Calculation (w*n)	Sampled schools (n)	Sampled Respondents*
National Schools	Girl's school	1	1	3
	Boys' schools	1	1	3
Extra County Schools	Girl's school	3	2	6
	Boys' schools	5	3	9
County Schools	Girl's school	7	4	12
	Boys' schools	10	6	18
	Mixed schools	12	8	24
Sub-County Schools	Girl's school	23	15	45
	Boys' schools	51	33	99
	Mixed schools	112	72	216
Sub Total for Schools		225	144	432
Sub County Director of Education(SCDE)				7
Grand Total				439

Simple random sampling was used to select teachers while purposive technic was used for selection of sub county education officers.

3.4 Instrumentation

Questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection in this study. Questionnaire was administered on teachers while interview schedule was used gather information from the principals. Questionnaires were deemed fit to collect

information from teachers owing to their large number (Creswell, 2015).

On the other hand, interview process collection of information deeply held from lived experience.

3.5 Instrument Validity and Reliability

The researchers used content validity index (CVI) to the validity of the study instruments. This involved ratings of four experts based on item relevance to constructs of study variables (Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021). The ratings adopted a 4-point ordinal scale of 1 – 4 for not relevant to highly relevant. The calculated rating of the four experts generated a CVI of 0.88. This was considered to be highly relevant by the researchers.

Reliability of the study instruments was checked based on data collected from a pilot study involving randomly selected 22 schools (66 respondents) who were excluded from the final data collection exercise. With the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 tool, the reliability was calculated using split-half method whereby a coefficient of 0.893 was obtained. The instrument was therefore considered as reliable in collecting the required data since the reliability coefficient surpassed the threshold of 0.70 espoused by reliable scholars (Akhtar, 2016; Creswell & Clark, 2018; Taherdoost, 2016).

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Quantitative data collected using questionnaire was analysed via descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics enabled generation of mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) which was essential for interpretation of quantitative results. On the other hand, inferential statistics generated data which helped in explaining the

relationship demonstrated in the model: $Y = a + \square X + e$

The researchers also used Thematic Analysis to analyse qualitative data obtained through interview schedule. This involved coding verbal information from interviews and then grouping them to form themes relevant to study variables as articulated in Braun & Clarke(2019).

RESULTS

4.1 Performance of Teachers

The first part of the study instrument analysed components of teachers' performance. Based on statements reflecting performance expectations of a teacher, the respondents were asked to state their agreement on a scale of 1 – 5 from strongly disagree to Strongly Agree (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1 Means and standard deviations on Communication Methods

Indicator	Res.	1	2	3	4	5	6	M	SD
The principal and students gather	DM	0.0	1.5	13.0	32.1	35.9	17.6	4.55	0.98
	SL	2.2	10.2	10.9	39.4	21.2	16.1	4.15	1.27
The school hold student council gathering	DM	1.5	13.0	11.5	33.6	31.3	9.2	4.08	1.21
	SL	3.6	13.9	14.6	20.4	28.5	19.0	4.21	1.41
The school communicate to students through notice boards	DM	7.6	9.2	15.3	29.0	26.7	12.2	3.95	1.41
	SL	9.5	5.1	30.7	15.3	23.4	16.1	3.81	1.50
The school communicate to students through class teachers	DM	0.0	6.1	6.9	30.5	29.8	26.7	4.67	1.12
	SL	10.9	3.6	16.1	22.6	21.2	25.5	4.18	1.62
Direct communication with students by the principal	DM	3.1	2.3	7.6	13.7	38.2	35.1	4.87	1.22
	SL	2.2	5.8	20.4	21.9	26.3	23.4	4.32	1.33
Written communication directly with students	DM	7.6	16.8	21.4	21.4	22.1	10.7	3.67	1.46
	SL	21.9	20.4	20.4	13.9	10.2	13.1	3.11	1.69
Through subject teachers	DM	3.1	3.8	13.7	29.8	34.4	15.3	4.34	1.19
	SL	8.0	10.2	27.0	14.6	19.0	21.2	3.92	1.59
Through open gatherings (<i>Kamkunji</i>)	DM	7.6	19.8	23.7	27.5	13.7	7.6	3.43	1.36
	SL	7.3	8.8	21.9	27.0	23.4	11.7	3.85	1.40
The principal uses nonverbal communication to communicate such as eye contact, facial expression, gestures	DM	6.9	18.3	22.9	22.1	19.1	10.7	3.60	1.43
	SL	16.8	13.1	12.4	17.5	21.2	19.0	3.65	1.77
The principal give time to listen to what the students say	DM	4.6	10.7	14.5	19.1	26.0	25.2	4.27	1.48
	SL	2.9	2.9	13.1	29.2	26.3	25.5	4.51	1.27
Mean Rating on communication methods								4.06	0.75

Key: 1.00-1.82 (Never); 1.83-2.65 (Not Frequent); 2.66-3.48 (Somehow Frequent); 3.49-4.31 (Frequent); 4.32-5.16 (Very Frequent); 5.17-6.00 (Always).

Table 4.1 shows that out of 10 items, 7 had a mean above 3.50 which can be considered to imply that respondents agreed on those items. The result in Table 4.1 also shows that teachers agreed that performance appraisal had improved their preparedness to teach (M=3.79), enhanced their timely syllabus coverage (M= 3.69), improved their effective curriculum delivery (M = 3.65), enhanced professionalism in their teaching carrier (M= 3.65), enhanced ability to apply knowledge learned in solving problems (M= 3.62), enhanced ability to learn from others (M = 3.61) and enhanced knowledge in their subject area (M = 3.55). Most of the HODs

and the principals interviewed concurred with these findings. When asked how teacher appraisal enabled teachers in their school to work, one of the HODs had this to say.

Teachers are alert and focused. When the bell rings they are all in their respective places. Learners just like teachers are always ready for work (Principal B)

Pearson’s correlation analysis was used to determine the degree of relationships between communication and students’ discipline. The scores of both the variables, which were collected in form of frequencies, were converted into ratio scaled data by computing mean responses per respondents. In this regard, the mean response across a set of questions of Likert scale responses in each item were collapsed into one composite index to create an approximately continuous variable, within an open interval of 1 to 6, that is suitable for the use of parametric analysis, where high scale ratings implied high effective perceived communication methods and high students’ discipline, and vice versa. The correlation analysis result is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Correlation Analysis of Communication Practices and Students’ discipline

		Communication	Student Discipline
Communication	Pearson	1	.506**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	137	137
Student Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.506**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	137	137
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The results of the correlation analysis presented in Table 4.2 indicate that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between communication practices and students’ discipline ($n=137, r=.506, p< .05$) among secondary school students.

4.3 Regression Analysis of Communication Practices on Students’ Discipline

Regression analysis was used to determine the degree of relationship and the level of significance between communication practices and students’ discipline. A coefficient of determination was computed to estimate the level of influence of communication practices on students’ discipline. The results of model summary of regression are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Model Summary of Communication Practices on Students’ Discipline

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.506 ^a	.256	.250	.29814
a. Predictors: (Constant), Communication				

The model shows that communication methods accounted for 25% variation in student discipline among the secondary schools. This relationship is stable, having shed out only 0.006 units as signified by adjusted R Square value of .250. This is a fairly high influence of a variable (communication methods) on the dependent variable (students’ discipline). However, to determine whether communication methods were a significant predictor of students’ discipline, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: ANOVA of Communication Practices on Students' Discipline

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.129	1	4.129	46.450	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.000	135	.089		
	Total	16.128	136			
a. Dependent Variable: Student Discipline						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Communication						

From Table 4.4, it can be noted that communication practices was indeed a significant predictor of students' discipline among secondary school students [$F(1, 135) = 46.450, p < .05$]. This means that the level of students' discipline in a school can be significantly predicted by communication methods practiced by a secondary school. Table 4.5 shows the values of the coefficients of the regression.

Table 4.5: Regression Coefficients of Communication Practices on Students' Discipline

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower	Upper
1 (Constant)	2.639	.162		16.294	.000	2.318	2.959
Communication	.284	.042	.506	6.815	.000	.201	.366
a. Dependent Variable: Student Discipline							

$Y = \alpha + \beta X_1 + \epsilon$, where $Y =$ Students' Discipline; $X_1 =$ Communication and ϵ is the error term

$$Y = 2.639 + 0.284X_1 + \epsilon$$

From the results, there is a positive unstandardized co-efficient of 0.284, as

indicated by the co-efficient matrix with a p-value = .000 < .05 and a constant of 2.639. This therefore implies that for every unit improvement in communication methods, there will be 0.284-unit improvement in students' discipline among the public secondary schools. There is however 2.639-unit student discipline even when communication methods are not practiced by the school administration. Therefore, both the constant and communication practices contribute positively to the model. Consequently, it is concluded that the model can provide the information needed to predict students' discipline from the level of communication methods practiced. Similarly, an improvement in communication by one standard deviation, there is a subsequent improvement in students' discipline among the secondary school students by .506 standard deviations.

4.4 HYPOTHESIS 1 TESTING

To determine the influence of communication practices on students' discipline in public secondary schools, the following null hypothesis was formulated.

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between Communication methods and students' discipline in public secondary schools.

The investigated null hypothesis is $H_0: \beta_1 = 0$ and the corresponding alternative hypothesis being $H_1: \beta_1 \neq 0$. If the null hypothesis is true, then from $E(Y) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X$ the population mean of Y is β_1 for every X value, which indicates that X (communication methods) has no influence on Y (students' discipline) and the alternative being that communication practices is associated with students' discipline. Table 4.11, the regression ANOVA, indicates that the calculated F statistics was statistically significant [$F(1, 135) = 46.450, p = .000 < .05$].

Furthermore, Table 4.12 confirms that there is a significant p -value ($B=.284$, $t= 6.815$; $p=.05$) of the unstandardized co-efficient value. Hence, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis ($\beta_1 = 0$). Subsequently, the alternative hypothesis ($\beta_1 \neq 0$) was supported, and it was concluded that communication practices has statistically significant influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

The use of communication methods as illustrated in the table points at sustained efforts by the school administrators to make the institutions successful. Indeed, the General Systems Theory holds that interactions through communication forms the centre of relationships that lead to sustained behaviour of a single autonomous element, the success of the schools (Von Bertalanffy, 1956). This finding concurs with the observation made in Greece by Briniaet al (2022) that development of an effective communication system within an educational institution can potentially become the driving force for effective functioning. Similarly, another study in Kenya also revealed that through communication, class teachers assist in maintaining students' discipline in secondary schools through participating in administrative tasks, curriculum implementation, and guidance and counseling (Etyang & Okoth, 2018). However, the findings tend to contradict those of another study done in Kenya by Obiero et al (2022) which concluded that the principals' communication skills were considered below average in an investigation of the influence of the principal's communication skills on student discipline in West Pokot Sub County.

Another study done in Lesotho by Mukurunge, and Bhila (2019) also contradicted the findings in the current research: they found that the top to bottom communication model predominantly used by management in Lesotho is not effective in bringing the best out of university staff. It therefore emerging that what might influence student discipline management is the skills used for communication, and the method adopted in communicating.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that improved communication practices between school administration and students results into improved student discipline in the secondary schools and vice-versa. It is also concluded that success in using communication to manage student discipline lies on the communication skills of the school principals. In addition, it is also concluded that communication through class teachers is effective in improving student outcome especially in counseling and guidance.

References

1. Akhtar, I. (2016). Research design. *Research in Social Science: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308915548>
2. Amin, A., Alimni, A., Kurniawan, D. A., Septi, S. E. and Azzahra, M. Z. (2021). The study of differences and influences of teacher communication and discipline characters of students. *Jurnal Ilmiah Sekolah Dasar*, 5 (4), 622-630.
3. Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11 (4), 589-597, DOI: 10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806
4. Brinia, V., Selimi, P., Dimos, A. and Kondea, A. (2022). The impact of communication on the effectiveness of educational organizations. *Education Sciences*, 12(170). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12030170>
5. Creswell, J. W. (2015). *A concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research*. Sage Publications Ltd.
6. Daft, R. (2010). *Management*. 9th ed. Mason, OH 45040, USA: South-Western Cengage Learning.
7. Dawadi, S., Shrestha, S., & Giri, R. A. (2021). Mixed-Methods Research: A Discussion on its Types, Challenges, and Criticisms. *Journal of Practical Studies in Education*, 2(2), 25-36
8. Dhillon, N. and Kaur, G. (2021). Self-assessment of teachers' communication style and Its impact on their communication effectiveness: A study of Indian higher educational institutions. *Sage Open*, 1-13: DOI: 10.1177/21582440211023173
9. Dimov, B. C., Atanasoska, T. and Trajkovska, D. A. (2019). School discipline and school indiscipline. *Conference Paper*, UDC: 37.091.5(497.7).
10. Dissanayake, C. K. (2021). *General systems theory based conceptual framework for restructuring the higher education institution system*. American Society for Engineering 2021
11. Ergün, M. (2014). Analyzing disciplinary punishments in high schools in terms of different variables in Turkish education system. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 6 (1), 58-71
12. Etyang, P. P., & Okoth, U. (2018). Class Teachers' Role in Maintaining Students' Discipline in Secondary Schools in Teso South District, Kenya. *International Journal of Human Resources Management (IJHRM)*, 7(3), 1-8.
13. Geleta, A. (2018). Challenges of students' discipline in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes: A case of primary schools in DembiDollo and Nekemte towns of Oromia Region, Ethiopia. *Journal of Language and Culture*, 9(3), 13-21.
14. Habaci, I., Çelik, E. E., Habaci, M., Adigüzelli, F., & Kurt, S. (2013). Effective communication in educational administration. *US-China Education Review*, 3(9), 690-702.
15. Korkosz, M. (2011). Exploring the relationship between organisational communication and job satisfaction. *A study of internal communication within Irish-owned Communication satisfaction and working relationship pharmaceutical contract packaging company* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). National College of Ireland, Dublin.
16. Lukman, A. A. & Hamadi, A. A. (2014). Disciplinary Measures in Nigerian Senior Secondary Schools:

- Issues and Prospects. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 4(3), 11-17.
17. Mukurunge, T. and Bhila, T. (2019). An investigation into Gaps in the Flow of Communication at Institutional Level: Case of Universities in Lesotho. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 3(2), 434-438.
18. Mwambi, M. R. (2020). Application of system's theory in education. at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338841849>
19. Ning, B. (2018). Examining the importance of discipline in Chinese schooling: An exploration in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taipei. *Asia Pacific Education Review*: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-018-9563-4>.
20. Nanjundeswaraswamy, T. S. and Divakar, S. (2021). Determination of sample size and sampling methods in applied research. *Proceedings on engineering sciences*, 3 (1) 25 – 32.
21. Nebo, C. S., Nwankwo, P. N. & Okonkwo, R. I. (2015). The role of effective communication on organizational performance: A study of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
22. Simatwa, E. (2012). Management of student discipline in Secondary schools in Kenya, a case Study of Bungoma County. *Educational Research*. 3(2) 155-158
23. Tuazon, A. and Padiernos, M. (2016). Communication satisfaction and working relationship between public school heads and teachers. *Prism*, 21, 49–59.
24. Virtudazo, M. C. A. and Guhao, E. S. (2020). Student discipline in the classroom: Public school teachers' point of view. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 9(1), 271 – 282.
25. Zachos, D. T., Delaveridou, A. and Gkontzou, A. (2016). Teachers and School "Discipline" in Greece: A Case Study. *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research*, 7 (1), 4 - 14
26. Zegwaard, K. E., & Hoskyn, K. (2015). A review of trends in research methods in cooperative education. In K. E. Zegwaard (Ed.), *New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education 2015 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 59-62). Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education.